

## **Minutes of Special Meeting of June 25, 2007**

One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, California

### **CALL TO ORDER 7:30 P.M.**

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Dickenson, Lieberman, Feierbach, Warden, Mathewson

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Manager Crist, Community Development Director de Melo, Police Chief Mattei, Finance Director Fil, Human Resources Director Sam, City Treasurer Violet, Deputy City Clerk Aguilar

### **Opening remarks by Senator Leland Yee**

Senator Yee stated that by holding meetings with each city in San Mateo County, he can better understand the perspective of each jurisdiction. He would like to be a resource, and the City should utilize Dan Lieberman, his legislative aide, as a conduit for information and support.

### **Introductions**

#### **Regional Housing Needs/Allocation, Certification of Housing Elements, Local Control**

Community Development Director de Melo expressed concern regarding the number of units allocated to Belmont by Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) under the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. Director de Melo explained that even under the best scenario, the City could only build approximately 250 to 275 units over next seven years, primarily due to scarcity of land and infrastructure issues. He expressed the need to come up with a more reasonable number.

Mayor Feierbach stated that local governments should retain control in regards to the number of new housing units to be built. She also indicated that once building starts, developers will not stop.

Finance Director Fil stated that in order for Belmont to build thirty units per acre, it would need to find fifteen acres of land in a city that is already built out, which is not practical.

Senator Yee stated that California is a growing state and an attractive area to live and work. He indicated that the State does not have the money to build the infrastructure to accommodate the influx of residents. He stated that cities should maximize use of urban space and transit corridors through in-fill development before developing on open space, since build-out threatens open space and the environment. Local governments should perform due diligence to see how local needs can be met, but it is not his desire to force housing numbers upon cities. If they cannot meet requirements, he would like to work together to see what can be done.

Councilmember Mathewson expressed concern that the City is being asked to build transit-oriented units, but local train service is being taken away.

Councilmember Lieberman raised the question of development versus infrastructure, and which precedes which. Each is dependent upon the other. He noted that if the City were to construct more transit units, it would have a strong argument to request additional train service.

Senator Yee agreed that with new development comes the need for infrastructure, and it is reasonable for local governments to ask for assistance from the State in terms of funding. He also expressed concern that suburban life offers many amenities for children that cannot be found in crowded cities. Urban areas should strive to protect its open spaces and quality of life for future generations.

#### **Ralston/U.S. 101 Pedestrian and Bike Bridge**

City Manager Crist stated that Caltrans has approved a \$6 million dollar bicycle/pedestrian bridge project, and the City has secured half of the funding. A half million dollars are State funds and those funds will expire in two years. He indicated that the project should be completed before then, but the City may need an extension. City Manager Crist asked Senator Yee to monitor this project.

Senator Yee stated that his staff will stay on top of this and other highway projects, and that any concerns should be directed to Dan Lieberman.

#### **Infrastructure Bond Proposition 1B**

City Manager Crist stated that Belmont's total allocation of SB286 funds is approximately \$800,000 and noted that the City would like to receive its portion as soon as possible. He stated that every city has a large maintenance backlog, including Belmont. Delay in receiving these funds is causing deterioration of roadways.

Senator Yee responded that this item is being fast-tracked and is moving forward.

#### **Net Metering of Electric Usage**

Councilmember Dickenson stated that he is currently working with other elected officials to produce regulatory improvements that will maximize the benefits net metering would provide for users of the electric grid.

City Manager Crist stated that under current legislation, Belmont could not receive financial credit for producing surplus energy nor offset other energy bills coming from a nearby meter.

Finance Director Fil stated that Belmont currently owns a corporation yard with a large roof where solar panels could be installed. He stated that the City embraces the green concept and would like to deploy a solar panel system, but would like to use energy produced at the corporation yard to offset bills at City Hall by combining all meters onto one bill.

Senator Yee stated that he would vote for such a bill if Senator Simitian were to amend it.

#### **Public Safety (PL 104-191)**

Police Chief Mattei expressed concern that the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) has no provision for gathering and disseminating information regarding injured minors who are transported to out-of-county hospitals in an emergency situation. He stated that

there needs to be a process to access and relay information to parents regarding the location of their children for reunification purposes.

### **Water Dog Lake Dredging**

City Manager Crist stated that there currently are no local funds to dredge Water Dog Lake or to maintain its structural integrity. The City is looking at Proposition 84 as a potential source of funds to accomplish both. It may take \$1 million dollars to dredge the lake. The City will conduct a study first which would address the dredging and necessary structural improvements.

### **State Relinquishment of State Route 82 (El Camino Real) to Local Agency**

City Manager Crist stated that a public policy discussion should be held to determine whether State Route 82 (El Camino Real) should remain a state highway or be relinquished to the local communities.

Senator Yee responded that on the State level, there are concerns about traffic congestion on Highway 101. One of the alternatives to alleviate congestion on Highway 101 is to use El Camino Real as an “escape valve”. It is an important arterial route for the State. He does not foresee it being turned over to local government. If development happens along El Camino Real in connection with the Grand Boulevard Plan, traffic will be pushed onto side streets.

Councilmember Lieberman stated that this could be a great opportunity for government to partner with big businesses along the Peninsula to find public transportation and commute solutions to alleviate the traffic congestion along El Camino Real where costs are shared.

Senator Yee agreed that there is a need to establish public transportation connectivity that works for people.

Councilmember Mathewson also stated that Belmont would be impacted by construction of Bay Meadows 2 in San Mateo and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation in San Carlos. This concern was not addressed in either project’s Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### **State Lands Acquisition – Island Park**

Finance Director Fil stated that as part of Belmont’s economic development effort, the City is looking at sites to make strategic improvements. It has identified two parcels at Island Park owned by the State. He indicated that if the State decides to surplus this land, Belmont would like to be contacted.

Senator Yee responded that he will look into whether that land will become available.

### **Pension Reform**

Human Resources Director Sam inquired as to whether there are continued efforts at the State level to pursue public pension reform, either as a defined benefit or defined contribution plan.

Senator Yee stated that the Governor has created a commission to study this. One plan is to invest a set number of dollars in individual employees, giving them the decision making power

to invest on their own. However, he indicated that some sort of benefit would still need to be provided to employees.

**Additional Items**

Councilmember Dickenson inquired as to Senator Yee's position on AB1634: Spaying & Neutering. Senator Yee responded that he is inclined to vote No.

Councilmember Mathewson inquired as to the status of situation at Center for Independence of the Disabled (CID). Dan Lieberman, legislative aide, responded that information is coming regularly and he hopes that talks will progress. He is monitoring this case closely.

Mayor Feierbach thanked Senator Yee for taking the time to meet with City staff.

**ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 8:28 p.m.**

**Pamela Aguilar  
Deputy City Clerk**

Council Meeting Tape Recorded